

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough review of the present application, and respectfully request reconsideration in light of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-31 are pending in the application. Claims 9-31 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner. Claims 1-8 have been amended to overcome the *35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph* rejection. No new matter has been introduced through the foregoing amendments.

The *35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph* rejection of claims 1-8 is noted. Claims 1-8 have been amended to overcome this rejection, taking into account the Examiner's comments in the first two paragraphs on page 3 of the Office Action.

The *35 U.S.C. 102(e)* rejection of claims 1-8 as being anticipated by *Nakamura* is noted. This rejection is deemed inappropriate because the applied reference clearly fails to teach or disclose each and every element of the rejected claims. At the very least, the following elements of independent claim 1 are not disclosed or suggested by *Nakamura*:

a **first partitioning wall** partitioning the inner air passage between the evaporator and heater core accommodating spaces into first and second air passages for directing air from the evaporator accommodating space to first and second portions of the heater core accommodating space, respectively; *see*, e.g., element 32 in FIG. 1 of the instant application and FIG. 1 of *Nakamura*;

a **guide wall** partitioning the space behind the heater core accommodating space into third and fourth air passages, wherein the third air passage is positioned between the guide wall and the first portion of the heater core accommodating space and communicated with the first air passage,

and wherein the fourth air passage is formed behind the guide wall to communicate with the first and second air passages; *see*, e.g., element 44 in FIG. 1 of the instant application and FIG. 1 of *Nakamura*;

a **combined door** positioned **between said fourth air passage and said second air passage** for adjusting degrees of opening of said first floor vent and said fourth air passage; *see*, e.g., element 50 in FIG. 1 of the instant application; *Nakamura* fails to teach or suggest the claimed combined door because it fails to teach or suggest the claimed second and fourth air passages.

first and **third** temperature adjusting doors rotatably disposed in front of the **second** and **first** portions of said heater core accommodating space, respectively; *see*, e.g., elements 52 and 56 in FIG. 1 of the instant application; *Nakamura* fails to teach or suggest the claimed first and third temperature adjusting doors because it fails to teach or suggest the claimed first partitioning wall.

In addition, the present invention is different from *Nakamura* in the following aspects:

In the present invention, since a two-layer recirculation air/fresh air flow partitioning structure is employed, the recirculation air/fresh air can be blown independently or in combination, the heating performance is improved, windscreen fogging can be prevented, and defrosting performance is improved. However, the *Nakamura* device does not provide these advantages.

In the present invention, the temperature-adjusting doors have a function of controlling the temperature of air passing through the heater core and flowing toward each vent. This can be done by controlling the sizes of the openings of air passages leading toward the heater core and controlling the amount of air flowing toward the heater core. However, in the *Nakamura* device the doors installed at the vents only have a function of opening and closing the openings of the vents and are not related to controlling the temperature of air passing through the heater core and flowing toward each vent.

In the present invention, an air passage can be chosen, resistance of an air passage can be decreased, and a two-layer flow mode can be established by, in a cooling mode or a heating mode, opening or closing the front foot vent 38 and the rear air passage 46b and by controlling the combination door 50. However, the *Nakamura* device does not provide these advantages.

In view of the above, withdrawal of the *35 U.S.C. 102(e)* rejection relying on *Nakamura* is believed appropriate and therefore courteously solicited.

Each of the Examiner's rejections has been traversed/overcome. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Early and favorable indication of allowance is courteously solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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